

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 VALLET 00859 291311Z

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 OPR-02 A-01 SSO-00 EURE-00 NSC-05

NSCE-00 (ISO) W
----- 118664

O R 291245Z JUL 75
FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA
TO AMEMBASSY HELSINKI IMMEDIATE
INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 6314

C O N F I D E N T I A L VALLETTA 0859

HELSINKI FOR ASST SECRETARY HARTMAN

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, MT
SUBJECT: MINTOFF DESIRE TO MEET WITH SECRETARY KISSINGER IN
HELSINKI

REF: STATE 175795

1. I AM MOST GRATEFUL FOR REFTEL'S INDICATION OF A POSSIBLE
MINTOFF MEETING WITH THE SECRETARY WHILE IN HELSINKI AND
HAVE TOLD BOTH AMB ATTARD KINGSWELL AND MINTOFF'S PRIVATE
SECRETARY TO CONTACT YOU CONCERNING SETTING A TIME AND PLACE.

2. IT NOW APPEARS, HOWEVER, THAT ILLNESS (THIS TIME A GENUINE
ONE) MAY PREVENT MINTOFF FROM GOING TO HELSINKI. FOR PAST
SEVERAL DAYS, MINTOFF HAS BEEN LAID LOW BY A HIGH FEVER AND
AN INFECTED THROAT. AS A RESULT OF THE LATTER, HE HAS LOST
HIS VOICE COMPLETELY, HAS NOT PARTICIPATED IN PARLIAMENTARY
DEBATES THIS WEEK AND HAS BEEN REDUCED TO COMMUNICATING
WITH SUBORDINATES IN WRITTEN NOTES. THIS SITUATION STILL
OBTAINED LAST NIGHT, AND AS OF THIS MORNING, FOREIGN SECRETARY
ABELA TOLD ME THAT MINTOFF, "IN ALL PROBABILITY," WOULD NOT BE
ABLE TO GO. FALL BACK POSITION IS FOR DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER
ANTON BUTTIGIEG (HE IS ALSO MINISTER OF JUSTICE AND PARLIAMENTARY
AFFAIRS) TO ATTEND IN HIS PLACE AND READ HIS SPEECH FOR HIM.

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3. IN TYPICAL MINTOFF FASHION, HE IS POSTPONING THE FINAL

DECISION UNTIL DOCTORS LOOK AT HIM AGAIN TOMORROW MORNING
(JULY 30). IF HE THEN FEELS UP TO MAKING TRIP HE WILL LEAVE
IMMEDIATELY, BUT FOREIGN SECRETARY GIVES THIS ONLY A TEN
PERCENT CHANCE. IF BUTTIGIEG GOES INSTEAD, I VERY MUCH DOUBT
THAT ANY ATTEMPT WILL BE MADE TO ARRANGE ANY MEETING WITH THE
SECRETARY, AND I WILL OF COURSE DISCOURAGE IT IF THE MALTESE
RAISE SUBJECT WITH ME.

4. WHETHER MINOFF GOES OR NOT, OUR EXPRESSION OF WILLINGNESS
TO SEEK TO ARRANGE A MEETING FOR HIM WITH THE SECRETARY IN
HELSINKI WILL BE VERY HELPFUL TO US. SMITH

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